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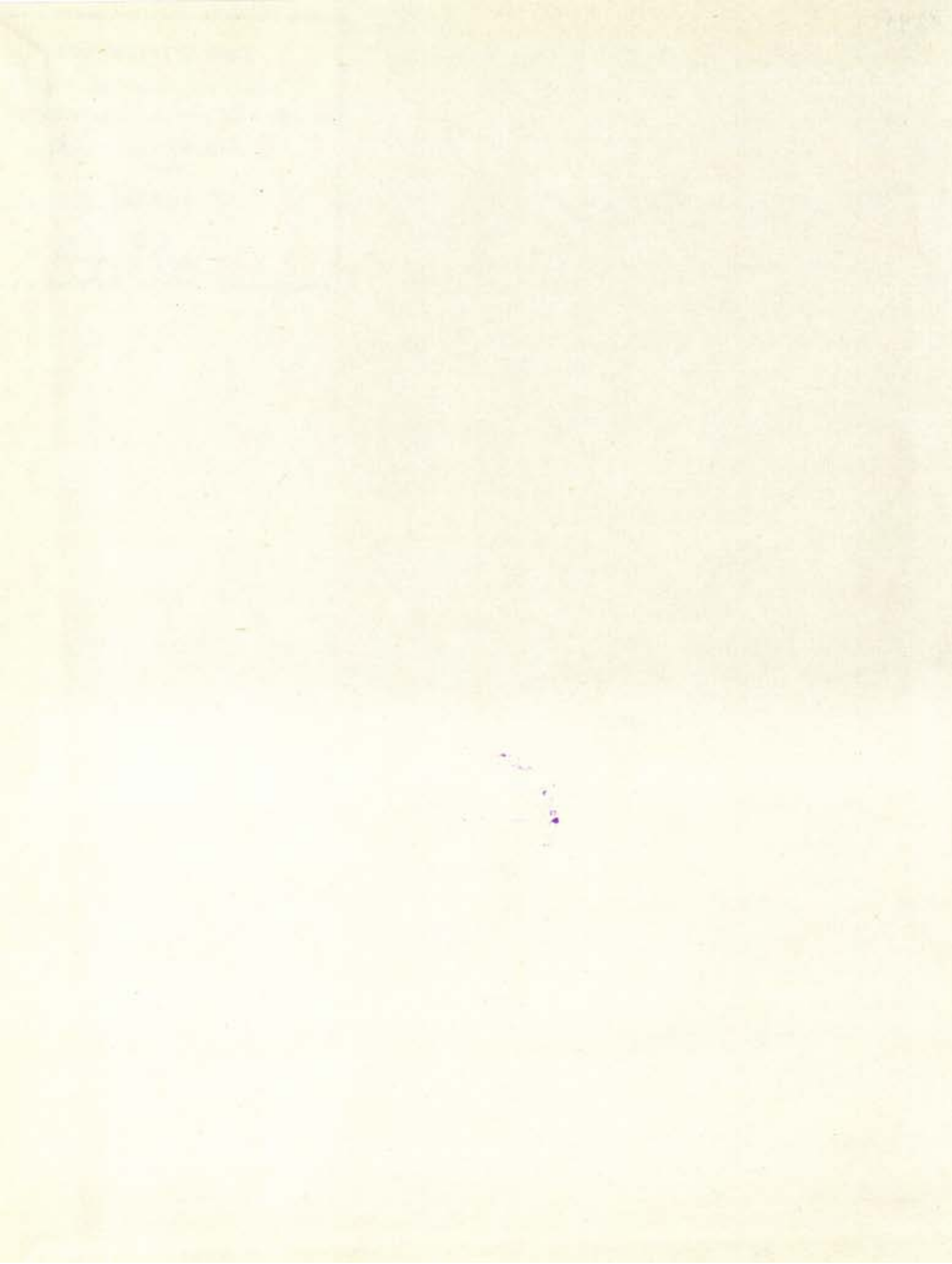
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EXPLORATION IN ORISSA

BY

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## EXPLORATION IN ORISSA

THE ancient temples of Orissa are far better known than the ancient sculptures of Orissa. The sculptures that adorn the wellknown temples of Bhuvanesvar, Puri and Konarak are, with few exceptions, of little independent artistic value. Hitherto the sculpture of Orissa was represented in the Indian Museum by a handful of inferior specimens from these sites and has attracted very little attention. In order to procure more typical and attractive specimens I undertook to visit in turn some of the less known sites of Orissa during 1927-28 and succeeded in acquiring about a dozen specimens representing different stages in the development of plastic art in Orissa and in bringing to light a practically unknown phase of early mediæval art. An account of these specimens without reference to the sites they come from and the other typical sculptures still *in situ* will fail to convey to the reader their historical significance. I therefore propose, in this Memoir, to give a short account of the sites and their monumental remains to serve as a background of the account of my acquisitions from Orissa in 1927-28. As I visited the sites primarily for the acquisition of specimens, I could not spare time for disinterested exploration and collection of materials for exhaustive accounts of the sites. But as no illustrated accounts of these sites have yet been published,<sup>1</sup> the information set forth here, however inadequate, may be of some use to archaeologists.

### JAJPUR

The first among the sites of this group in historical importance is Jajpur, also known as Virajākshetra, on the Vaitaraṇī in the Cuttack District. In the Mahābhārata, Book III, Chapter 85 (Chapter 83 of the edition based on the South Indian Manuscripts), after the enumeration of the holy rivers of Eastern India like the Lauhitya (Brahmaputra), the Karatoyā, and the place where the Ganges falls into the sea (Bay of Bengal), it is added :—

*tato Vaitaraṇīm gatvā sarvapāpāpramochanīm  
Virajā-tīrthamāsāḍya virājati yathā śaśī*

“Then, proceeding to the (river) Vaitaraṇī that washes away all sins, and reaching the bathing *ghāt* (*tīrtha*) at Virajā (the pilgrim) shines like the moon.”

Jajpur is known as Virajā or Virajākshetra after Virajā or Durgā, the presiding goddess of the place. This reference to Jajpur in the great epic shows that it was the first *kshetra* or holy place in Orissa that attracted pilgrims from upper India.

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written Mr. Haran Chandra Chakladar has published “A great site of Mahayana Buddhism in Orissa” in the *Modern Review* for August, 1928, pp. 217—223, and a Bengali article, *Udīshyā aurīhat prāchīna Buddha-pīṭha* in the *Pravasi* for Āvin, 1335, September—October, 1928, pp. 811—818. The Indian Museum collection of sculptures from the Cuttack hills is noticed in the latter article (p. 817).



The most notable objects of antiquarian interest that first attract the attention of the visitor to Jajpur are the four colossal images within the compound of the Sub-Divisional Officer. One of these is an image of the Bodhisattva Padmapāni of decomposed Khondalite of the later Gupta period, now lying on the ground on its back, and measuring in its present condition (without the feet and base) 16 feet in height. This image escaped the notice of Stirling and Kittoe, but was first brought to public notice by Mr. G. Smeaton, Assistant Collector, Jajpur, in his "Report on the Archæological Remains of Jajpore," published in the Supplement to the *Calcutta Gazette*, August 4, 1869 (pp. 565-567). Smeaton found the image half-buried at a place called Santamadhav within the limits of Jajpur. The lower half of the image was recovered by Mr. Locke, Principal of the Government School of Art, Calcutta, who visited Jajpur three years later,<sup>1</sup> and both the halves were subsequently removed to the compound of the Sub-Divisional Officer's Bungalow. As we shall see below, this image probably originally belonged to one of the hills in the Assia range so rich in Buddhist remains.

The three other colossi within the compound of the Sub-Divisional Officer are images of Vārāhī (ht. 8' 10") (Plate I, fig. 1), Chāmunda (ht. 8' 10½") and Indrānī (ht. 8' 8"), all carved in chlorite schist. Stirling found these images at the back of the high terrace supporting the cenotaph of the Musalman saint Saiyid Bukhārī, lying with their heels uppermost on a heap of rubbish "in precisely the same position apparently that they assumed when tumbled from their thrones above".<sup>2</sup> The images still lay behind the terrace after having undergone further damage in the interval when Kittoe first visited Jajpur.<sup>3</sup> They were removed to the compound of the Sub-Divisional Officer by Mr. Joseph Armstrong, C. S., in 1866, in spite of the warning of the populace "that the sacrilege would make the holy man uneasy in his tomb".<sup>4</sup>

The high terrace referred to by Stirling and other writers in connection with the three colossal images is popularly known as the Mukti Maṇḍapa or the assembly hall of the learned Brahmans. It is a large platform constructed of dressed stone slabs and measuring about 100 feet square. On the north or front side, the platform is 9 feet 6 inches in height and on the back side 7 feet 6 inches. In the middle of the front side there is a projection measuring 33' 7" by 19' on which evidently stood the porch of the original structure on the platform. On either side of the projection is a stairway of stone measuring more than 13 feet in breadth. Above each stairway there was an entrance door the carved bases of the jambs of which are still *in situ*. In front of the projection of the terrace stands the tomb of 'Alī Bukhārī, a lieutenant of Kālāpāhār, the Muhammadan general, who conquered Orissa in 1568 A. D. According to local tradition the colossal images of Chāmunda, Vārāhī and

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1872, February 2.

<sup>2</sup> A. Stirling, "An Account, Geographical, Statistical and Historical of Orissa Proper or Cuttack," *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. XV, 1825, p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> Kittoe, "Extracts from the Journal of Lieut. Markham Kittoe, submitted to the Asiatic Society at the meetings of the 6th October 1836—Ruins and Pillar of Jajpur." *The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. VII, 1838, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Hunter, *Orissa*, Vol. I, London, 1872, p. 267.



Indrāṇī now in the Sub-Divisional Officer's compound along with the images of the five other Mothers,—Brahmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Vaishṇavī, Kaumārī and Nārasimhī of the same colossal size originally stood on the platform. "The Muhammadans broke down five and made them (so runs the tradition) into balls and shots for their guns, and threw three down the platform."<sup>1</sup>

For 'Alī Bukhārī and his activities at Jajpur we have got nothing better to rely on than oral traditions. A Persian inscription on a stone slab fixed on the gateway of the enclosure in front of the tomb shows that it was in existence 165 years before. The inscription reads:—<sup>2</sup>

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

به پیش آستان منور احاطه سنگ در و گذار با اشجار ز صدق نیت خود بنا ساخت بن ولی بیگ

خان محمد آنار - در سنه ۱۱۷۰ عملی

"In the name of God, the merciful, the clement! In front of the holy shrine (luminous threshold) an enclosure with a stone gate and an orchard with trees have been built with honest intention by Ibn Walī Beg *Khān* Muhammad Ānār in the 'Amālī year 1170 (=A. D. 1762-63)."

Of the three surviving colossal images belonging to the Mukti Maṇḍapa group, Chāmunḍā and Indrāṇī are very badly mutilated. But a more complete and better preserved set of images of the Mothers and allied deities of chlorite schist are found in a shrine on the Daśāśvamedhaghāt of the Vaitaraṇī river at Jaipur. According to Stirling these images are said to have been recovered lately out of the sand of the river—where they were tossed by the Moguls on their shrines being destroyed—by a *mahājan* (merchant) of Cuttack who built the edifice in which they are now deposited.<sup>3</sup> A splendid image of Chāmunḍā (*Kālī*) (Plate I, fig. 2) and those of five Mothers are fixed in this order along the back wall of the shrine:—Chāmunḍā (*Kālī*), Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Vaishṇavī, Kaumārī (Plate I, fig. 4) and Māheśvarī. On an average these images measure 6 feet in height by 3 feet in breadth. Between the images of Vaishṇavī and Kaumārī is fixed the statue of a hideous old woman seated with both her knees drawn up, her right hand resting on her right foot and her left hand placed on the left knee (Plate I, fig. 3). Including the base this figure measures 5 feet 3 inches in height. The priests attached to the shrine recognize in this image Chhāyā, the consort of the Sun god and *Yama-mātri*, the mother of Yama. As we shall see below, this is not an image of Chhāyā, but of Sivadūtī. Like the images of the Mothers of the Mukti-maṇḍapa group, these images are also made of chlorite schist.

To the north of the shrine of the Mothers stands the temple of Gaṇeśa. The image of Gaṇeśa installed in this temple is of the same material and of the same size (6' by 3') as the Mothers, and its back slab, like the back slabs of the

<sup>1</sup> Banurji, Chandrasekhara, "An account of the Antiquities of Jajpur in Orissa." *J. A. S. B.*, Vol. XL, 1871, Part I, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Deciphered by Maulavi Shamsuddin Ahmad, Assistant Curator, Archaeological Section, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

<sup>3</sup> Stirling, *op. cit.*, p. 336.



two groups of Mātṛi images of Jajpur, is absolutely plain. So this Gaṇeśa also must have originally belonged to the same group as the Mātṛis. It is stated in the Matsya Purāṇa (262, 38), "An image of Vināyaka (Gaṇeśa) should always be carved (and placed) in front of the Mātṛis."

Unfortunately none of these images of chlorite schist bear any inscription that may indicate their date. Stylistically also they stand apart from other sculptures that are usually met with at the old sites of Orissa. But they are certainly much older than the images of the same material found in the niches of the temples of Bhuvanesvar and may be safely assigned to the early mediæval period.

Perhaps to the same age should be assigned the famous monolithic column of Jajpur of which the Garuḍa capital is lost.<sup>1</sup> All the old temples of Jajpur are said to have been destroyed by the Muhammadan invaders. But in and around the modern temples we come across a large collection of sculptures,—Buddhist, Brahmanic and Jaina, that range in date from the 8th to the 16th century A. D. In this group is to be classed a chlorite image of Vajrasattva acquired for the Indian Museum from Salempur on the southern bank of the Vaitaraṇī in the Balasore District opposite to Jajpur (Plate II, fig. 3). Jajpur was and still is a great centre of Brahmanism. According to the Annals included in the Mādala-pāñji or the palm-leaf records of the temple of Jagannātha at Puri, Yayātikesarin recovered the kingdom of Orissa from a band of foreign invaders (called Mughuls) in A. D. 474 and built his palace near Jajpur. A part of the town on the south of the dry bed of the Mandākinī is still known as Naar-padā, 'the site of the palace,' where, according to the local tradition, the palace of Yayātikesarin once stood. To the south of Naar-padā stands the temple of Virajā, a comparatively modern structure, in building which materials of older structures have been freely used. Virajā is said to have been the patron goddess of Yayātikesarin himself and the *kshetra*, as we have already seen, is named after her. The image of Virajā enshrined in the temple is hidden by clothes; consequently no other part of her body than the bejewelled head is visible. From the *dhyāna* or description of the image recited by the priests and from their account we learn that Virajā is a form of Durgā engaged in killing the buffalo demon. She is two-armed and rides on a lion. With her right hand she holds a spear (*śūla*) which pierces the body of the buffalo and with her left hand she pulls the tail of the buffalo. Her right foot presses the head of the animal.

Whatever may be the age of the present image of Virajā, the two-armed type of Mahishamardini carries us back to an early period, probably to pre-Gupta period. The image of the goddess carved in a niche of the Śiva temple of the Gupta period at Bhumara in the Nagod State in Baghelkhand, though shown as dealing with the buffalo demon in exactly the same fashion as Virajā, is four-armed.<sup>2</sup> Mahishamardini carved on the front wall of Udayagiri near Bhilsa is ten-armed. In Bāṇa's *Chandīśataka*, a work composed in the first half of the seventh century A. D., wherein Mahisha is said to have been crushed

<sup>1</sup> Jorgussou and Burgess, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, London, 1910, Vol. II, p. 111, Fig. 321.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 16, Plate XIV (b).



to death by the left foot of the goddess set down on its shoulder (stanza 2), her *bhujavanam* (forest of arms) are twice mentioned (stanzas 39 and 64), and in the *Devīmāhātmya* included in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* which is universally recognised as the most authoritative source of the myths relating to the Devī (Goddess), her form pervading the sky is described as thousand-armed, and in her normal form she is said to hold trident, discus, conch-shell, spear, bow, arrow, thunder-bolt, bell, rod, noose, sword and shield. According to the *Varāha Purāṇa* (Chap. 95, 41) the goddess assumed 20 arms and according to the *Vāmana Purāṇa* (Chap. 19, 6) 18 arms, before engaging in her duel with the demon Mahisha. Most of the mediæval images of [Mahishamardini] are either eight or ten-armed.<sup>1</sup> The two-armed Durgā appears to me to be the earliest form of the goddess conceived by her votaries and Virajā represents the earliest phase of the cult of the goddess. Jajpur, therefore, may on this ground be recognised as an old centre of the cult of Virajā or Durgā. In the Puri annals it is said that Yayātikesarin built a temple of Jagannātha at Puri measuring 38 cubits and laid the foundation of the temple of Liṅgarāja at Bhuvanesvar which was completed by his great-grandson Lalāṭendukesarin in A. D. 666. From the inscriptions of the Gaṅga kings of Orissa we learn that Anantavarman Chodagaṅga built the present temple of Jagannātha at Puri in the twelfth century A. D.<sup>2</sup> and the temple of Liṅgarāja was evidently built about a century before.<sup>3</sup> The account of the early kings of the Kesarin Dynasty as given in the Puri annals seems to lack historical basis. But the antiquities of Jajpur noticed above, and the Buddhist relics found on some of the hills of the Assia range within the Jajpur sub-division of the Cuttack District to be noticed below, leave no room for doubt that there was a great revival of both Buddhism and Brahmanism in that region in the later Gupta period.

### Buddhist Monuments of Orissa in the seventh century A. D.

The earliest relic found in the western hill tracts of the Cuttack District is a fragment of a stone slab (13" by 8½") bearing an inscription on all sides in very cursive Gupta characters (Plate II, fig. 2) from Ratnagiri, the easternmost hill of the Assia range. The slab has been presented to the Indian Museum by Babu Śrīpati Jenā, Zemindar of Ratnagiri. Though the inscription on this slab has not yet been fully deciphered, it may be assigned to the 6th century A. D. on palæographic grounds. To the following century should be assigned the image of Padmapāṇi from Sāntamadhav at Jajpur referred to above (p. 2). Though mutilated, the disposition of the knees (the straightened right leg and slightly flexed left leg) of this image indicates that the weight of the body rested on the right leg. A life size (6' 1" × 3' 8") image

<sup>1</sup> See *Agni Purāṇa* (Bib. Ind.), Chap. 50, 1-6; *Matsya Purāṇa* (Anandasrama Sanskrit Series No. 54), Chap. 260, 55-65; Hemadri, *Vrata-Khaṇḍa* (Bib. Ind.), Vol. I, pp. 79-80; Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 345-347.

<sup>2</sup> Monmohan Chakravarty, "The date of Jagannāth temple at Puri in Orissa", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LXVII, 1898, Part I, p. 328.

<sup>3</sup> A. S. L., A. R., 1923-24, p. 122.



of the four-armed Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara on the Ratnagiri has a similar pose—standing erect resting on the left leg with the right leg slightly flexed. This naturalistic pose is a common feature of the standing Buddhist images of the Gupta period. But the inferior modelling of the Jajpur and Ratnagiri images with this pose seems to indicate that they are not the products of a well-established school of art, but the first crude efforts of artists who were serving their apprenticeship by imitating Gupta models.

The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang) has left a short account of Buddhist monuments in Wu-t'u (Ota), Orissa, in the seventh century A. D. Watters thus translates the account:—

“Continuing his narrative Yuan Chwang (Hiuen Tsang) tells us that from Kāṇasuvāna he travelled south-west above 700 *li* and came to the Wu (or U)-t'u country. This he states, was above 7,000 *li* in circuit, and its capital above twenty *li* in circuit; \*\*\* they (the people) were indefatigable students and many of them were Buddhists. There were above 100 Buddhist monasteries, and a myriad Brethern all Mahāyānists. \*\* There were more than ten Aśoka topes at places where the Buddha had preached. In the south-west of the country was the *Pu-sie-p'o-k'i-li* (restored by Julien as “Pushpagiri”) monastery in a mountain; the stone tope of this monastery exhibited supernatural lights and other miracles, sunshades placed by worshippers on it between the dome and the amalaka remained there like needles held by a magnet. To the north-east of this tope in a hill-monastery was another tope like the preceding in its marvels. The miraculous power of these topes was due to the topes having been erected by supernatural beings. Near the shore of the ocean in the south-east of this country was the city *Che-li-ta-lo* (Charitra ?), above twenty *li* in circuit, which was a thoroughfare and resting-place for sea-going traders and strangers from distant lands. The city was naturally strong and it contained many rare commodities. Outside it were five monasteries close together, of lofty structure and with very artistic images.”<sup>1</sup>

Roughly speaking, Hiuen Tsang's Wu-t'u corresponds to northern Orissa bounded by the river Mahanadi in the south, beyond which extended Koṅḡada Maṇḍala. The capital of Orissa at the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit is, I believe, rightly identified by Waddell with Jajpur. The Pushpagiri monastery in a mountain in the south-west of the country would be the Udayagiri or the Nalatigiri, for both these hills are to the south-west of Jajpur, and the Ratnagiri is to the south. The Ratnagiri inscription in Gupta characters and the Bodhisattva images of the Gupta style at Jajpur and on the Ratnagiri indicate that there were Buddhist establishments on one or more of these hills in the seventh century A. D. The site of *Che-li-ta-lo* has not yet been definitely determined. Discovery of artistic Buddhist images in Gupta style somewhere near the sea shore in the Cuttack District may one day lead to the identification of the site of this sea port.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. II, pp. 193-194.

<sup>2</sup> Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 195; Pandit Binayak Misra proposes to identify *Che-li-ta-lo* with Puri on insufficient evidence (*Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. XIII, 1922, p. 88).



### Mahārāja Śubhakaradeva and Monk Prājña

Hiuen Tsang's description of the monasteries on the hills does not warrant us to conclude that they had attained as much importance as Nālandā of his day. But historical records and ancient remains show that the Buddhist establishments on the hills of the Assia range rivalled Nālandā in the eighth century A. D. According to the Neulpur (now Indian Museum) grant of Mahārāja Śubhakaradeva, a line of Buddhist kings reigned in Northern Tosali (roughly Northern Orissa) in the 8th century A. D.<sup>1</sup> The first king of the dynasty, Kshemañkaradeva, is described as one "who established the castes and orders (*varṇāśrama*) to their proper duties," that is to say, enforced the caste-code, and was a *paramopāsaka*, "devout lay worshipper". In the Buddhist literature a lay follower of the Buddhist Śramaṇa or monk is called *upāsaka*. In modern parlance Kshemañkaradeva was both a Hindu and a Buddhist. All Indian Buddhists, from Bimbisāra and Aśoka downward, professed the same mixed form of religion; they were the upholders of the Brahmanic social order as well as worshippers of the three jewels,—Buddha, Dharma (Buddhist code) and Saṅgha (order of monks). Kshemañkara's son *nripati* (king) Śivakaradeva is called *paramatathāgata*, "the devout worshipper of the Tathāgata (Buddha)", Śivakaradeva's son and successor, Mahārāja Śubhakaradeva, the donor of the grant, calls himself *parama-saugata*, "the devout worshipper of Sugata (Buddha)". His title, simple *Mahārāja*, shows that he was not an independent sovereign, but acknowledged the overlordship of some neighbouring king. To the north of Orissa then extended the dominion of the lord of Gauḍa of the Pāla dynasty and to the west and the south-west the dominion of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king of the Deccan. Mahārāja Śubhakaradeva must have acknowledged the suzerainty of one of these two monarchies, more probably of the Buddhist lord of Gauḍa. The grant is issued from the victorious camp or capital city. Śubhadevapāṭaka, and the lands donated are two villages, Kompāraka and Daṇḍāñkiyoka, in the valley between the hills (*parvata-dronī*). None of these places have yet been identified. The find-place of the copper-plate grant, Darpan, near the Mahāvināyak hill, and the situation of the villages donated, indicate that the hill tracts in the western part of the modern Cuttack District were included in the dominion of Śubhakaradeva. The donees of the grant are 177 Brahmanś of different *gotras* who were well-versed in the four Vedas. The study of the Vedas survived among the Jajpuri Brahmanś until very recent times.

Mr. R. D. Banerji who has published the grant of Śubhakaradeva has assigned him to the second half of the 8th century A. D. Professor Sylvain Levi has brought to light a passage in a Chinese Buddhist text wherein it is said that in 795 A. D. the Chinese emperor Te-tsung received as a token of homage an autograph manuscript addressed to him by 'the king of the realm of Wu-ch'a (Uḍa=Orissa) in southern India', who had a deep faith in Sovereign Law, and who followed the practice of the Sovereign Mahāyāna, "the fortunate

<sup>1</sup> R. D. Banerji, "Neulpur Grant of Subhakaradeva: the 8th year". *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XV, pp. 1-6.



monarch who does what is pure, the lion". Prof. Levi recognises in "who does what is pure, the lion" the name *Subhakara-kesarin* or *Subhakara-simha*, and identifies him with Mahārāja Subhakaradeva of the Indian Museum (Neulpur) grant. The manuscript presented by Subhakaradeva to the emperor of China contained the last section of the *Avatamsaka* which, as well as the accompanying letter, was entrusted to the monk Prājña who was instructed to supply a translation. "We learn from Yuan-chao", adds Prof. Levi, "that Prājña was born in Kapiśa, on the western verge of the Indian world, had commenced his studies in northern India, had continued them in mid-India (*madhyadeśa*), that he had resided in Nālandā, visited the sacred places, had thus passed eighteen years in learning; afterwards he had settled in 'the monastery of the king of Wu-ch'a (Uḍa, Orissa), of southern India' to study Yoga there".<sup>1</sup>

Many of the Mahāyāna Buddhist images of the Bodhisattvas, Tārās and other deities found in the hill tracts of the Cuttack District bear inscriptions in letters of the same type as those used in the copper plate grant of Subhakara. Therefore such images may be safely attributed to the reign of Subhakara and his Buddhist predecessors. The biography of Prājña quoted above, written by a Chinese contemporary, shows that in those days Orissa was as a great a centre of Mahāyāna Buddhist learning as Magadha with its university of Nālandā. Very probably the monasteries on the three hills I am going to describe constituted a great University. As these hills are little known and all the published accounts are from the pen of local officials,<sup>2</sup> I shall also give an account of the route to be followed and accommodation available in the neighbourhood for visitors.

### Nalatigiri (Naltigiri)

The first of the hills visited by me was Nalatigiri or Naltigiri. I got down at the Dhanmandal Railway station on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. From Dhanmandal there is a road up to Balichandrapur on the Birupa river, a distance of 8 miles. Nalatigiri lies about six miles to the south-east of Balichandrapur. There is no road in this part and the country is inhospitable. There is a very poor Canal Bungalow called *koṭhi* at Haribhakatpur.<sup>3</sup> When we reached the Haribhakatpur Bungalow we met Pandit Ārtatrān Miśra, zemindar of Mauda and part proprietor of the Nalatigiri, waiting to receive us and act as our host and guide. Nalatigiri or Naltigiri (Lalitagiri) is the name of a big *mauza* or village. There are three hills within this village that are collectively known as Nalatigiri,—the Alashuni, the Loṇḍā or Nandā Pahar and the Parahari or Parabhari. The Alashuni bears no ancient remains. But the cenotaph of the saint Arakshit Das, the founder of the Arakshit Dasi sect

<sup>1</sup> Sylvain Levi, "King Subhakara of Orissa," *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XV, pp. 363-364; Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> Chaudrasekhara Banerji, "Notes on the antiquities of the Nalti the Assia and the Mahabinayaka hills of Cuttack," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XXXIX, 1870, Part I, pp. 158-171; John Beames, "The Alti hills in Cuttack," *Ibid.*, Vol. XLIV, 1875, pp. 19-23; O'Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Cuttack*, Calcutta, 1906, Chapter XV.

<sup>3</sup> Haribhakatpur may be more conveniently reached *via* Jagatpur Ry. station. There is motor service from Jagatpur to Mahanga about 4 miles to the south of Haribhakatpur.



of Oriya *sādhus* (monks), is situated on it and attracts large number of pilgrims. The north-eastern half of the Loṇḍā hill slopes towards the base of the Parahari hill and is covered by extensive remains of ancient brick buildings. The brick mounds that have been excavated by the residents of the neighbourhood from time to time for quarrying bricks have yielded splendid images of the Mahāyāna deities of decomposed Khondalite. It is said that more than forty years ago a zemindar, Ramgovinda Jagadev, removed four images from the Nalatigiri to Kendrapara, and later on two images have been removed to Padam-daspur by another zemindar. Two remarkable collections of sculptures may still be seen on the hill. About 20 years ago a *sādhu* belonging to the sect of Arakshit Das established a *maṭha* (monastery) on the top of the Loṇḍā hill. In this monastery a colossal image of Buddha seated in earth-touching attitude, said to have been exhumed from a neighbouring brick mound, is placed in a hut under a tree. Near by is an unfinished modern temple in the niches on the walls of which have been fixed a considerable number of magnificent Buddhist images. Plate II, fig. 4 shows the northern wall of this temple. The carved door jambs must have belonged to one of the ancient temples of the hill. The image of two-armed Avalokiteśvara fixed on the left of the door frame measures 4' 8" by 2' 5". The Buddhist creed is inscribed on its halo in nail-headed characters used in the eighth century A. D. To the right of the door frame is fixed a four-armed image of Tārā holding *vajra* (thunder-weapon) in her left upper hand. This image measures 5' 10" by 27". Certain even more beautiful images are fixed on other walls of the temple. One of these is a superb image of Maitreya in excellent state of preservation (Plate II, fig. 1). It measures 7' 6" by 3' 2". Another, fixed on the southern wall, is a militant form of Tārā standing on two crouching figures and measures 5' 9" by 2' 6". About two hundred yards to the north of the *maṭha* stands in the open a two-armed image of Mañjuśrī (6' 8" by 2' 9"). Another group of more than half a dozen Buddhist images of the same type is found around the temple of Garh Vāsulī just above the pass between the Loṇḍā hill and the Parahari hill. One of these, a two-armed standing image of Avalokiteśvara (6' 2" by 2' 8"), fixed in the outer wall of the temple, is reproduced in Plate II, fig. 5. The Buddhist creed is engraved on the back slab of this image in eighth century characters. On the northern slope of the Parahari hill, near *mauza* Kesraipur, there is a long shelf cut out of the hill side and known as the Hātikhāl. On this shelf we find the remains of what was once a gallery of life-size Mahāyāna Buddhist images. Six of the images still stand facing north partially buried in débris and parts of two others are found lying. Within the village Kesraipur, under a tree, and worshipped as a village godling, is a curious image of Jina Rishabha (3' 2" by 1' 7") with the Buddhist creed engraved on the back.

### Udayagiri

From Haribhakatpur we proceeded to the Bungalow of Gopalpur five miles to the north-east on the Pātāmūṇḍai canal that here runs parallel to the Birupa

river. Here Babu Parvati Charan Ray, local agent of Babu Hariballabh Das of Jajpur, proprietor of the Udayagiri *mauza*, acted as our guide and friend. About two miles to the north of the Bungalow, on the other side of the Birupa is situated the Udayagiri, the most easterly peak of the Assia range. Two arms of this hill, one extending to the north-east and the other to the south-east, form a bay opening to the east. In the middle of the plain enclosed in the bay, on a low mound of débris, stands a two-armed image of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (7' 10" by 2' 10") with the Dhyānī Buddha Amitābha seated in meditation in the head-dress (Plate III, fig. 1). On the back slab the name of the donor is thus inscribed in characters of the seventh or eighth century A. D. :—

1. *deya dharmo=*
2. *yam bhikshu-Su*
3. *bhaguptasya*

"This is the pious gift of the monk Subhagupta."

About 200 yards ahead of this image at the base of the terrace of the hill is a rock-cut well which is thus described by Chandrasekhar Banurji :—

"It is 23 feet square, cut 28 feet deep from the top of the rock to the water's edge, surrounded by a stone terrace, 94 feet 6 inches long, and 38 feet 11 inches broad. The entrance to the terrace is guarded by two monolithic pillars, the tops of which are broken. The edge of the well and the extremity of the terrace are lined with battlements of large blocks of wrought stone, rounded on the top, and three feet in height, leaving a wide passage or walk behind. The well is situated towards the southern extremity of the terrace. From the north and in the middle of the terrace, a few yards off the entrance, a flight of steps (3 feet in breadth, and 31 in number) runs down the rock as an approach to the water. The rock between the lowest step and the well has been cut into an arch, and on its face there is an inscription."<sup>1</sup>

This inscription in one line reads :—

*Om rāṇaka śrī-Vajraṇāgasya vāpī*

"This well (is dedicated by) Rāṇaka Vajraṇāga."

The same inscription is repeated in two lines on the rock on the right side of the steps. On the eastern wall of the stone terrace or platform of the well is an unfinished inscription which reads :—

*śrī rāṇaka Mā*

These inscriptions are engraved in Nāgarī characters assignable to the tenth or eleventh century A. D. From the margin of the platform of the well begins to rise the extensive natural terrace at the foot of the hill which is covered with a very interesting group of remains. Just beyond the well in the thick jungle Chandrasekhar Banurji, and after him John Beames, found a magnificent door frame. Mr. Beames writes, "With the permission of Babu Ramgobind Jagdeb, the zemindar of the estate, I am now engaged in having this beautiful gateway carefully removed by skilled workmen to Cuttack, where it will be

<sup>1</sup> Banurji, *op. cit.*, p. 165.



erected in the Public Garden and taken care of."<sup>1</sup> The doorway is now fixed in the open ground to the east of the compound of the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack (Plate III, fig. 3). I was told at Udayagiri that Mr. John Beames removed to Cuttack not only the door frame, but a few other sculptures also. Four of them are now to be seen standing in the open ground near a modern shrine at Cuttack a few yards to the north-east of the spot where the door frame stands. One of these images is a four-armed standing Avalokiteśvara (4' 7" by 2' 2") in almost perfect state of preservation bearing an inscription on the back in characters of the eighth century A. D. which seems to embody an extract from a Buddhist text. There are two other Buddhist images in this collection:—a twelve-armed seated Prajñāpāramitā (2' 8" by 1' 9") and a seated Avalokiteśvara (2' 8" by 1' 9"). The fourth sculpture in the Beames collection at Cuttack is an image of Gaṅgā with attendant figures carved on a slab which evidently formed part of a door jamb. It shows the river goddess riding on an elegantly decorated *makara* floating on water the ripples of which are indicated by slightly wavy lines. The figure of the goddess and those of the three attendant female figures are full of movement and their poses are in harmony with the movement of the water. The three male votaries rising out of the water with offerings carved above on the same level as the head of Gaṅgā is rather an awkward element. The upper halves of the body of two geese flying downward with a garland held in their beaks add a fine realistic touch to the composition.

Now to return to Udayagiri, in the southern part of the terrace, at some height from the base, there is a modern temple of Mahākālī where worship is offered to a group of badly damaged old images covered with vermilion on every Thursday by a priest who belongs to the Mālī or Mālākāra (gardener) caste. From a brick mound near this temple was dug out the image of Vaiśravaṇa (Plate IV, fig. 1), measuring 2' 6" by 1' 6", which Babu Pārvatī Charan Ray has presented to the Indian Museum on behalf of Babu Hariballabh Das of Jajpur. On stylistic grounds this image is assignable to the same period—8th or 9th century A. D.—as the inscribed Bodhisattva images. A little higher up the terrace in the midst of the jungle stands a fine image of four-armed Avalokiteśvara (6' 8" by 3' 7"). The lower part of this image is considerably damaged (Plate III, fig. 2). On the back this image bears a long inscription in the nail-headed characters of the eighth century A. D. which opens with the Buddhist creed and evidently contains an extract from some text. A few yards to the south of this image in a ruined brick shrine a colossal image of seated Buddha carved out of several pieces of stone lies half buried (Plate III, fig. 4). Like the southern part of the big terrace of Udayagiri, the northern part also is covered with numberless brick mounds. One of these mounds, called Itābhāṭī or brick mound, represents a Buddhist stūpa. In the four niches on four sides of this stūpa there were evidently installed four images of Buddha. A standing image of Buddha lies partially buried on the western side. There is a fine image of Buddha seated touching the earth on the eastern

<sup>1</sup> John Beames, *op. cit.*, p. 23.



side (Plate IV, fig. 2). The type of old Nāgarī characters used in engraving the Buddhist creed on the back slab of this image indicates that it cannot be assigned to an earlier epoch than the tenth century A. D. The colossal image of seated Buddha noticed above is of the same style as this image and should be assigned to the same period. Two Bodhisattva images of the older (eighth century) style in much more damaged condition are also visible in the northern part of the terrace. These and other sculptures form much less than a moiety of what Chandrasekhar Banurji and John Beames saw on the terrace of Udayagiri in the early seventies. Besides the pieces removed by Beames to Cuttack, Ramgovinda Jagdev, the zemindar, removed a considerable number of images to his house at Kendrapara. Many more lie buried in the brick mounds on the terrace that are hidden by impenetrable jungle.

### Ratnagiri

Ratnagiri is an isolated hill of the Assia range four miles to the north-east of Gopalpur and stands on a small stream named Kelua, a branch of the Birupa. The main difficulty of reaching Ratnagiri from Gopalpur is the Birupa which has to be forded at a place below her junction with the Kimiria. Ratnagiri is first noticed in O'malley's Cuttack District Gazetteer (Calcutta, 1906, p. 206) where the discovery of the site is attributed to the well known antiquarian, late Rai Bahadur Monmohan Chakravarti, who was at one time the Sub-Divisional Officer of Jajpur. The hill stands on the eastern bank of the Kelua and has a flat top. There are modern houses on both the western and eastern slopes of the hill. As we go up the hill from the bank of the Kelua by the village road we see on both sides votive stūpas and fragments of sculptures and of architectural pieces. A very notable one among these fragments is a Buddha head measuring 3' 8" by 3' 2". I also noticed on the hill some more heads of colossal Buddha images, though none so big as this one. On the top of the hill is situated the temple of Mahākālī which may be three to four centuries old. A large number of Buddhist images lies scattered around this temple. There is also a curious twelve-armed three (four) headed image of Śiva Bhairava (3' 10" by 2' 2") among the number. That it is an image of Śiva is indicated by the crescent on the crown (Plate IV, fig. 3).

A few yards beyond the temple of Mahākālī in a grove of big trees are placed in groups a collection of about a dozen life-size Buddhist images. One of these, a four-armed Avalokiteśvara (6' 1" by 3' 8") standing in easy pose like images of the Gupta period has already been referred to (p. 6). Other standing Avalokiteśvara and Tārā images of this group are made to stand in *tribhaṅga* (three bends) pose, the trunk of the body inclining towards the left and the head inclining towards the right. As a type specimen we reproduce the photograph (Plate V, fig. 1) of two-armed Tārā (5' 5" by 3' 5") belonging to this collection. It also includes an image of two-armed Heruka (5' 2" by 2' 6") wearing a garland of human heads and dancing on a corpse<sup>1</sup> (Plate V, fig. 2).

<sup>1</sup> Benoytosh Bhattacharya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, London, 1924, pp. 61-62.



Babu Sripati Jena has presented to the Indian Museum a seated image (19½" by 13½") of two-armed Avalokiteśvara (Plate IV, fig. 4) from Ratnagiri. The sculptors of Ratnagiri appear to have been in touch with the sculptors of Magadha in the tenth and eleventh centuries A. D. An image of Buddha seated in earth-touching attitude near the image of Tārā noticed above discloses clear Magadhan influence in the decoration of the back slab. Another image (3' 9" by 1' 11") of the same type, but much inferior in execution, was removed from Ratnagiri to Jajpur a few years ago and is now preserved in the Bungalow of the Sub-Divisional Officer (Plate V, fig. 3). The Buddhist creed is engraved on the back of this image in Nāgarī characters of the eleventh century A. D. Two other seated images of Buddha with the Buddhist creed engraved in characters of the eighth or ninth century from Ratnagiri are deposited in the same place. The remains of a big stūpa, the *pradakshīṇa* (circumambulation) path round which was enclosed by four walls forming a square are still traceable on the hill.

### Kendrapara

As at Nalatigiri and Udayagiri, at Ratnagiri also we were told that a few images were removed from that hill by Ramgovinda Jagdev to Kendrapara. So we visited Kendrapara, the headquarters of the Kendrapara Sub-division of the Cuttack District, to examine the Jagdev collection. Babu Ramgovinda Jagdev was a big zemindar and proprietor of Udayagiri. He died long ago. His family is ruined and his house at Kendrapara, on the walls of which the images collected by him were fixed, has been partially dismantled by his successors. The original collection must have been a large one. The bulk of it came from Udayagiri. As the sculptures of the three hills are marked off by definite traits, I had no difficulty in picking up those that came from the other hills. Some of the images in the collection now lie badly damaged and others have been disfigured in the attempt to repair the broken nose. I have acquired five specimens of decomposed Khondalite belonging to this collection for the Indian Museum. These are :—

(1) A standing image of the Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi from Nalatigiri. The figure is in perfect state of preservation. Though the top of the back slab is broken off, it still measures 7' 1" by 3' 2". (Plate VI, fig. 3.)

(2) Two-armed Padmapāṇi Avalokiteśvara (6' 11" by 3' 3") from Nalatigiri. There is a goad on the lotus which was held in the left hand now broken. (Plate VI, fig. 1.)

(3) Four-armed Tārā seated at ease with the right leg hanging down the lotus seat (5' 4" by 3') from Nalatigiri. (Plate VI, fig. 4.)

(4) Eight-armed Mārīchī (3' 9" by 1' 11") probably from Udayagiri. A railing (partially broken) is shown in front of the figure of the goddess. (Plate VI, fig. 5.)

(5) Two-armed Avalokiteśvara (19" by 13") seated at ease, evidently from Ratnagiri. (Plate VI, fig. 6.)



### Early Mediaeval Art of Orissa

Specimens of early mediaeval sculpture were not hitherto unknown in Orissa, for the temple of Paraśurāmeśvara at Bhuvanesvar richly decorated with sculptures has with considerable degree of certainty been attributed to the eighth century A. D. But the sculptures that decorate Paraśurāmeśvara and others of the same type and style, a few of which found their way to the Indian Museum in 1912 from Puri, cannot stand comparison with the early mediaeval sculptures dating from the seventh to the ninth century A. D. found in the well known early Chalukya, Pallava and Rāshtrakūṭa cave and structural temples in the Deccan and Southern India. The early mediaeval decorative sculptures found here and there at Jajpur indicate that the early mediaeval stone temples of Jajpur were not of much architectural importance. The temples and monasteries on the Nalatigiri, Udayagiri and Ratnagiri were made of bricks, and the only stones used in their construction were the door frames, the columns and the images installed in the niches. But artistically some of the images found on these hills and at Jajpur rank as high as any produced in any other part of India after the Gupta period and in certain respects even higher. So the characteristics of these sculptures as works of art deserve our attention.

As we have already seen, the characters used in the inscriptions on the images of the Bodhisattvas and other Mahāyāna deities found on the hills clearly indicate that they are assignable to the early mediaeval period. Hiuen Tsang in his account of the Pushpagiri monastery (see above, p. 67) refers to two stūpas, but to no sculpture; so it may be assumed that there was no image deserving special notice at that time on that hill, and the best among the early mediaeval Buddhist sculptures in the hill tracts should be assigned to the eighth century A. D., the age of the Kara kings. The magnificent images of the Mātṛis (Mothers) and the allied deities (Sivadūtī and Gaṇeśa) found at Jajpur I have also ventured to assign to the same epoch. With the Mātṛis of Jajpur should also be taken into consideration the images of the so-called 'seven sisters' (*sātābahini*) deposited in a shrine on the Mārkaṇḍeśvara tank at Puri. This group consists of more or less mutilated images of the Brahmāṇī (Plate VI, fig. 2), Māheśvarī, Kaumārī (Plate IX, fig. 1), Vaishṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī (Plate IX, fig. 2), Chāmuṇḍā (Plate IX, fig. 3), Gaṇeśa (Plate IX, fig. 4) and another male deity (Plate VII, fig. 1) who sits on a bull and holds in his right upper hand a lotus, in his right lower hand a sacrificial spoon (?), and in his left upper hand a trident of which the lower end only remains. The left lower hand of this image is lost. I propose to identify this god as Vireśvara. It is stated in the Matsya Purāṇa (262, 39), "Lord Vireśvara, mounted on bull, with (head covered with) matted locks of hair and holding *vīṇā* and trident, should be placed in front of the Mātṛis."

### The Mother Goddesses

In ancient India art was always the handmaid of religion; its aim was to give visual forms to the religious thoughts. What then, are the thoughts to-



which the artists who made the Mahāyāna Buddhist images and the images of the Mātṛis, endeavour to give expression? The myths relating to Durgā and the Mātṛis narrated in the Devīmāhātmya section of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa and the Vāmana Purāṇa help us to read these thoughts. According to the Devīmāhātmya, long long ago there took place a hundred years' war between the gods headed by Indra and the Asuras headed by Mahisha which ended in the victory of the latter and his occupation of the heaven of the gods. The gods with Prajāpati Brahmā at their head approached Viṣṇu and Śiva, narrated the story of Mahisha's triumph and solicited them to devise means for the destruction of the great Asura. On hearing the story Viṣṇu and Śiva grew furious and great energy (*tejas*) issued forth from their mouths. Great energy also went forth from the bodies of the other gods and amalgamating with the energy of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā assumed the form of the goddess Chāṇḍikā or Durgā (Kātyāyanī). Śiva gave her a trident, Kṛishṇa a discus, Varuṇa a conch shell and a noose, Agni a spear, Marut a bow and a quiver filled with arrows, Indra a thunderbolt and a bell, Yama a rod, Brahmā a *kamaṇḍalu* (water pot), Kāla a sword and a shield, Viśvakarman an axe, Himavat a lion to ride on and Kuvera gave a drinking cup full of wine. Thus equipped, the Devī overpowered the Asura Mahisha by kicking him on his neck with her foot, and piercing his body with the trident (*śūla*) when the upper half of it issued forth from his buffalo mouth, she struck off the head of the Asura. The gods then sang the praise of the Goddess and prayed that whenever they might invoke her she should save them from their calamities. "Be it so," said the Goddess and disappeared.

Again the gods were vanquished and expelled from heaven by Śumbha, another king of the Asuras, aided by his brother Niśumbha, and going to the Himalayas recited a hymn to the Goddess. Pārvatī appeared before the gods and from her body issued forth Ambikā. Śumbha through a messenger requested Ambikā to marry either himself or his brother Niśumbha. The Goddess replied, "He who vanquishes me in fight shall be my husband." Then followed a fearful fight between the Goddess and the host of Asuras led by Śumbha. Śumbha sent Chāṇḍa and Muṇḍa, two mighty Asuras, who, according to the Vāmana Purāṇa, once belonged to the host of the Asura Mahisha, to fetch the Goddess whether dead or alive. When Chāṇḍa and Muṇḍa approached the Goddess with an army of Daityas, "Ambikā uttered her wrath aloud against those foes and her countenance then grew dark as ink in her wrath. Out from the surface of her forehead, which was rugged with frowns, issued suddenly Kālī of the terrible countenance, armed with a sword and noose, bearing a many-coloured skull-topped staff, decorated with a garland of skulls, clad in a tiger's skin, very appalling because of her emaciated flesh, exceedingly wide of mouth, lolling out her tongue terribly, having deep-sunk reddish eyes, and filling the regions of the sky with her roars."<sup>1</sup> Kālī killed Chāṇḍa and Muṇḍa and obtained from Ambikā the name '*Chāmūṇḍā*.' Śumbha now came out in person at the head of a formidable army. At that moment the Śaktis or Energies of Brahmā, Maheśvara (Śiva), Kumāra, Viṣṇu, Varāha,

<sup>1</sup> Pargiter, *Markandeya Purāṇa* (Bib. Ind.), p. 499.



Narasimha and Indra (i.e., Brahmanī, Māhesvarī, Kaumārī, Vaishnavī, Vārāhī, Nārasimhī and Indrāpī) came out as Mātṛis or Mothers and hastened to the aid of Ambikā. Each of these Mātṛigaṇa or Mothers had the form, the ornaments, the weapons and the vehicle of the god she represented. Ambikā, aided by the Mātṛigaṇa, slew Rakta-vīja (another great Asura also originally belonging, according to the Vāmana Purāṇa, to the host of the deceased Asura Mahisha), Niśumbha and several others. Taunted by Śumbha for fighting with the aid of other goddesses, Ambikā absorbed in herself the seven Mothers and Chāmuṇḍā or Kālī, and engaged in a single combat with Śumbha which ended in his death. At a *kshetra* or holy place particularly dedicated to Virajā or Durgā Mahishamardini, it is natural to expect representations of other goddesses associated with her in her struggle with the Asuras, viz., the Mātṛigaṇa or the seven Mothers and Kālī (Chāmuṇḍā). With the exception of Durgā or Chaṇḍī, all other goddesses of the group are represented by the Indian artists not engaged in fighting but seated in peace. One of the most remarkable among these is the image of Chāmuṇḍā or Kālī. Perhaps the earliest in date among the three images of Chāmuṇḍā noticed above is the colossal one in the Sub-Divisional Officer's compound at Jajpur. Though badly mutilated, for both the right forearms and both the left arms with attributes are lost, the figure still faithfully reveals the character of the goddess as conceived by the authors of the Purāṇas. Her most characteristic feat is not the slaying of Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa that earned for her the name Chāmuṇḍā, but the invaluable assistance that she rendered Durgā in slaying the Asura Rakta-vīja, the most powerful ally of Śumbha and Niśumbha. Rakta-vīja, literally "blood-germ," had this virtue:—whenever he was wounded in battle and a drop of blood happened to fall to the ground from his wound, an Asura like himself in strength and valour started up. Entering the field of battle with a club, Rakta-vīja engaged in turn the seven Mothers and received several wounds. "By the stream of blood, which fell on the earth from him when he received many wounds from the spears, darts and other weapons, Asuras came verily into being in hundreds. And those Asuras who sprang from that Asura's blood pervaded the whole world; thereat the gods fell into the utmost terror." Seeing the gods dejected, Chaṇḍikā spoke with haste: she said, "O Chāmuṇḍā! stretch out thy mouth wide; with this mouth do thou quickly take in the great Asuras, which are the drops of blood, that have come into being out of Rakta-vīja at the descent of my weapon on him. Roam about in the battle, devouring the great Asuras who sprang from him, so shall this Daitya with his blood ebbing away meet destruction."<sup>1</sup> Chāmuṇḍā did as she was bidden. She not only devoured the Asuras that had already sprung from the blood of Rakta-vīja; she also quaffed all the blood that issued out of fresh wounds of Rakta-vīja till that Asura became bloodless and died. These Orissan and other known images of Chāmuṇḍā do not show her either engaged in slaying Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa or in devouring Asuras born of Rakta-vīja's blood, but as sitting at ease (*lalitāsana*)

<sup>1</sup> Pargiter, *op. cit.*, p. 505.



on a prostrate Asura. The image of Chāmunda (Plate I, fig. 2) deposited in the shrine on the Daśāśvamedhaghāt at Jajpur is in far better state of preservation. Her features closely, though not fully, answer to the description of the Devimāhātmya. She is armed with sword in her right upper hand. The left upper arm supports a staff. Her mouth is wide open with the tongue lolling and her body is rendered appalling because of her emaciated flesh. Other feature of the image of Chāmunda are thus noted in the Agni Purāṇa (50, 21-23) :—

“Chāmunda should be with sunken eyes, without flesh, three-eyed, without flesh and reduced to skeleton, having hairs shooting upwards, shrunken belly, wearing the skin of an elephant, holding a *paṭṭiśa* and a decapitated head in her (two) left hands, and a spear and a sword in her (two) right hands, seated on a corpse and adorned with (a garland of) skulls (*asthibhūṣaṇa*).”<sup>1</sup>

The skin of the elephant is conspicuous by its absence in both the Jajpur images of Chāmunda, but is shown in the Puri image (Plate IX, fig. 3). In both the Jajpur Chāmundas the corpse of the prostrate Asura is represented as supplicating for mercy with joined palms with the upper half of the body resting on the right side. But in representing the lower half of the body of the corpse the sculptors make a serious mistake and show the back instead of the front. The artist who carved the Puri Chāmunda succeeded in avoiding this mistake.

In all these three images of the emaciated figure of the grim goddess the sculptors of course ignore nature. They look like mere caricatures of the emaciated human body. But as caricatures they are full of life. The tense muscular tissues and veins instil movement into the figure of the goddess who seems to be enjoying a little rest after a very hard fight. Her terrible countenance is not without its redeeming feature. The supplication of the prostrate Asura seems to have touched her heart and so ferocity mingled with pity is reflected there. It is doubtful whether human imagination has ever succeeded in conceiving anything more hideous than Chāmunda engaged in quaffing Rakta-vija's blood and in devouring Asuras springing therefrom. But the symbolic meaning of the image is too apparent to be missed. The ever multiplying Asura Rakta-vija, 'blood-germ,' stands for the germ of vice in human nature which possesses as much capacity to multiply as the demon 'blood-germ,' and if it is to be eradicated man must evolve out of himself a Chāmunda, that is to say, an unrelenting resolve to destroy all roots and offshoots of vice.

As indicated above, though the Mātṛigaṇa or the seven Mothers figure in the Devimāhātmya as minor goddesses of war, the Indian artists do not represent them as actually engaged in war, but as real mothers each seated at ease on her proper vehicle with a child on her lap supported by the left lower hand to whom she offers protection with the right lower hand while holding weapons of war in her two upper hands. So in the images of the Mātṛis or mother goddesses there is an interpenetration of two antagonistic elements,

<sup>1</sup> Agni Purāṇa (Bib. Ind.), Vol. I, p. 143.



the war goddess and the caressing mother. This peculiar trait characterises not only the Śākta, but also the Mahāyāna, Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva images. Even if a god, a goddess or a Bodhisattva is two armed, with one (right) hand he or she is shown as offering boon or protection, and with the other, in most cases, he or she holds a sword, or *vajra*, or any other weapon indicative of warlike character. The colossal Vārāhī in the Sub-Divisional Officer's compound at Jajpur (Plate I, fig. 1) has lost both the right fore-arms and both of her left arms are mutilated. She is seated in easy posture on a throne. Her vehicle, buffalo, is carved on the base. A pot-bellied child is seated on her left knee. The head and both the arms of the child are lost. But though badly mutilated and bearing the head of a pig, this superb image impresses one with its serene dignity.

In the Daśāśvamedha group five out of the seven Mātṛi images, viz., Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī and Indrānī now survive. All these images are four-armed, and each has a plump pot-bellied child seated on the left knee, supported by the left lower arm. The right lower hand of each figure is held against the breast with the palm in *abhaya* or protection-offering pose. The two upper hands hold the appropriate weapons and attributes, and the other distinguishing feature, the vehicle, is carved on the base. Of these images we could photograph only Vaiṣṇavī and Kaumārī (Plate I, fig. 4.) The face of this image is lit up by the subdued smile of a mother proud of her child. In all these Mātṛi images the child is carved with wonderful skill.

The seated figure of the hideous old woman (Plate I, fig. 3) identified by the priests as the Yama-mātṛi, 'mother of Yama,' or Chhāyā, appears to me to be Śiva-dūtī. According to the Devīmāhātmya, during Chāṇḍikā's war with the Asura chiefs, Śumbha and Niśumbha, and immediately after the seven Mother goddesses embodying the energy of the different gods had come into being, Chāṇḍikā's own energy came forth from her body and assumed a form "most terrific, exceedingly fierce, howling like a hundred jackals." This howling goddess despatched Śiva as her messenger to Śumbha and Niśumbha to warn them of the dire consequences that would follow the continuance of the struggle, and therefore came to be known as Śiva-dūtī (one who has Śiva as her messenger). Śiva-dūtī held no weapon and the only part that she took in the great battle was to utter loud, violent, inauspicious laughs repeatedly and then swallow the Asuras. Śiva-dūtī's terrible laughter demoralized the Asuras who fell down on the earth and were devoured by her. This statue represents Śiva-dūtī seated smiling and evidently gloating over her achievements. Stirling writes, "Her form is that of a decrepit old woman, seated on a pedestal, quite naked with a countenance alike expressive of extreme age, and that sourness of disposition which has rendered her proverbial as a scold."<sup>1</sup>

The plain back slab and the shape of the throne on which the images are seated indicate that the Puri group of Mātṛis and the associated deities are the work of the same school of artists as the Jajpur groups. Though the modelling

<sup>1</sup> Stirling, *op. cit.*, p. 336.]



of the Puri images is better finished, their pose appears affected as compared to the Jajpur images. The Puri images are probably somewhat later in date than the Jajpur images.

In the Varāha Purāṇa (Chapter 27, 25-43)<sup>1</sup> the origin of the Mātṛis numbering eight and not seven as in the Devīmāhātmya, is connected with the slaying of the Asura Andhaka by Śiva. When Śiva pierced the body of Andhaka with trident up in the air, like Rakta-vījas, innumerable Andhakas sprang from the blood that dropped on the earth. Viṣṇu began to slaughter these new-born Andhakas with his discus. Then out of wrath flames issued from the mouth of Śiva which assumed the form of Yogeśvarī, and Brahmā, Viṣṇu Kārttikeya, Indra, Yama, Varāha and Śiva created in imitation of their own forms Brahmāṇī, Vaiṣṇavī, Kaumārī, Indrāṇī (Māhendrī), Yamī, Vārāhī and Māheśvarī, respectively. These goddesses drank the blood of Andhaka and thus was the trick of the demon defeated (*kṣayaṁ gat-āsuri māyā*). According to the Varāha Purāṇa "Yogeśvarī represents desire (*kāma*), Māheśvarī represents anger (*krodha*), Vaiṣṇavī represents greed (*lobha*), Brahmāṇī represents arrogance (*moha*), Kaumārī represents infatuation (*mada*), Indrāṇī represents envy (*mātsarya*), Yamī represents baseness (*paiśunya*) and Vārāhī represents absence of grudge (*anasūyā*)." The text is probably corrupt. The goddesses who helped Śiva, 'welfare,' to destroy Andhaka, 'blindness,' 'ignorance,' must have been the personifications, not of vices, but of virtues. Even in the text as it stands Vārāhī is identified, not with *asūyā* "grudge," but with *anasūyā*, "absence of grudge." The makers of the images of the Mothers and of the allied gods and goddesses found at Jajpur and Puri evidently followed the Devīmāhātmya which knows only seven Mother goddesses.

### Early Mediaeval Buddhist Art

Like the Śākta, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava deities, the Mahāyāna Buddhist deities also symbolize two antagonistic elements, *himsā* (injury of life) and *ahimsā* (non-injury), peace and war. But in the Mahāyāna deities the element of *himsā* (injury of life) is partially softened down by the Buddhist doctrine of *ahimsā* (non-injury). Buddha had to fight as hard with Māra and his hosts as Śiva with Andhaka and Durgā with Mahisha, Śumbha, Niśumbha and their hosts. But the weapons used by Buddha against his enemy were different from those used by Śiva, Durgā and Viṣṇu against the Asuras. The Tārās and the divine Bodhisattvas of the Mahāyāna pantheon correspond to the mother goddesses and the great gods of the Puranic (Brahmanic) pantheon. As a mark of the genetic connection of the Mahāyāna deities with the Brahmanic, the former retain the weapons of warfare and often show the fighting archer's attitude.

One striking feature of the early mediaeval sculptures found on the three hills, Nalatigiri, Udayagiri and Ratnagiri, is their stylistic differences. The

<sup>1</sup> Varāha Purāṇa (Bib. Ind.), pp. 175-177.



images on the Nalatigiri are marked by regular longish face with pointed chin, the images on the Ratnagiri by broad face with roundish chin and those on the Udayagiri by still broader face. But these are minor differences as compared to the many points of similarity that stamp them as works of one and the same school of art. The best and most typical among the sculptures on these hills are evidently the work of artists of the same school with individual tastes. The main point of departure of the sculptures of this early mediaeval Orissan school as compared to the works of the great Gupta school is the *tribhanga* (three bends) pose. This is no doubt a conventional attitude. But in our standing images the body is so unobtrusively and elegantly poised that what is really artificial looks quite spontaneous. Inclination to the same posture adds grace to the figures seated at ease with the right leg hanging down the lotus throne. The modelling of these Orissan mediaeval images, though not realistic, is characterised by freshness and movement like the best images of the Gupta period. Their face wears an expression of active benevolence intermixed with the spirit of passive contemplation. So it must be recognised that in these images the artists attained remarkable success in giving form to the divine conception of the followers of the religion of *bhakti* whose spiritual emotion is directed to a personal Being ready to bestow both boon (*vara*) and protection (*abhaya*) to His (on Her) devotees. But even if the spiritual significance of these images is ignored, no connoisseur will hesitate to include the Bodhisattvas found on the Nalatigiri among the most lovely things shaped by the hand of man. When compared with the contemporaneous Rāshtrakūṭa and Pallava sculptures, these Orissan sculptures, though lacking the dramatic vitality of the former, surpass them in serenity and gracefulness.

### Chauduar

From the tenth century onward sculpture began to degenerate in Orissa and stiff conventional forms took the place of the free and naturalistic poses of the early mediaeval images. The fine seated image of Avalokiteśvara of decomposed Khondalite acquired for the Indian Museum (Plate VI, fig. 6) from the Jagdev collection of Kendrapara and probably originally belonging to Ratnagiri may be assigned to the close of the tenth century A. D. The six-foiled arch that decorates the back slab of this image is a singular feature. A palm leaf manuscript (D)<sup>1</sup> of the annals of Orissa preserved by the Deul Karan of the temple of Puri gives an account of 44 kings of the Kesarin dynasty beginning with Yayāti-kesarin who reigned in succession from A. D. 474 to the conquest of the kingdom by Chōḍa-Gaṅga in the beginning of the 12th century A. D. In this account it is said that Chakrakesarin, the 37th king of the line, erected a temple of the eight Chāṇḍīs who evidently include the seven Mātris (mothers) with Chā-muṇḍā, and Bhimakesarin, the 40th king, is said to have installed the images of the "seven sisters," that is to say, the seven mothers, to the east of the

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the palm leaf manuscripts of the annals of Orissa examined by the writer see his "Notes on the Mādala Pāñji," *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. XIII, pp. 11-13.



Mārkaṇḍeśvara tank at Puri. As Chakrakesarin and Bhīmakesarin are otherwise unknown, it is unsafe to base any conclusions on these statements. Ananta varman Chodagaṅga of Kalinganagara (Mukhalingam in the Ganjam District), as already stated, conquered Orissa sometime in the first quarter of the 12th century A. D. Before the invasion of Chodagaṅga Orissa was ruled by a king named Udyotakesarin or his successor. From the Brahmeśvara stone inscription (now lost) published by Prinsep in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. VII, p. 558, we learn that Udyotakesarin traced his descent from Janamejaya, ruler of Telinga (Telugu country), who conquered Orissa. As five successive rulers—Dīrgharava, Apavāra, Vichitravīra, Abhimānyu, Chaṇḍihara—intervened between Janamejaya and Udyotakesarin, it may be assumed that Janamejaya conquered Orissa towards the close of the 10th century A. D.

The Telugu conquest marks a great turning point in the cultural history of Orissa. The Telugus are a Dravidian people. But their conquest did not lead to the Dravidianisation of the Orissan culture, but rather to the adoption of the Aryan Orissan culture by the conquerors themselves. This is best illustrated by the introduction of the Indo-Aryan (Nāgara) style of Architecture in parts of the Telugu country, in the Ganjam (Mukhalingam) and Vizagapatam (Sinhāchalam) Districts. But the contact of the Telugu culture with the Orissan considerably modified the latter and gave it a new turn. The Telugu ascendancy gave a strong impulse to Śaivism. The chief seat of the Government of Orissa was probably transferred from Jajpur to Chauduar, 'the city with four gates'. The extensive ruins of Chauduar spread on the northern bank of the Birupa, a branch of the Mahanadi, about 4 miles to the north of Cuttack. Chauduar in the north, Cuttack between the rivers Mahanadi and her branch Katjuri in the middle, and Sarangarh on the Katjuri about 5 miles south-west of Cuttack, are the three fortified cities that appear to have been occupied in turn by the rulers of Orissa after the abandonment of Jajpur. In the Puri annals referred to above it is stated that Jayakesarin, the 25th king of the Kesarin dynasty, made Chauduar his capital. The Oriya astrologers usually recite the annals of Orissa before their patrons on the Doljātrā (swinging festival) day in March. In a palm leaf manuscript of this class belonging to an astrologer of a village near Chauduar it is stated that king Janamejaya, great-grandson of Arjuna, a hero of the Mahābhārata, made Chauduar his capital. It seems to me that the Telinga conqueror Janamejaya is here conveniently confounded with the epic Janamejaya by the compilers of the local annals, and in the Jayakesarin of the Puri annals we may recognise an echo of the same name. It is said that the walls of the Chauduar fort were two miles long on each side. The extensive site is full of ancient mounds, one of which is reproduced in Plate VII, fig. 3. On the top of the mound still survive the lower parts of eight pillars marking four entrance doors. It seems to me that the whole site has come to be known as Chauduar after the remains of these "four doorways".

<sup>1</sup> The manuscript belongs to Madan Nayak of Kesarpur near Chauduar and has been copied for me by Babu Paramananda Acharya, B.Sc., Archaeological Scholar, Mayurbhanj State.





The remains of eight Śiva temples called *Aṣṭa Sambhu* around the city indicate that Chauduar was once a Śaiva centre. In the Chauduar annals the building of the temple of one of the eight Śivas, Śiva Uttareśvara, now in ruins, is attributed to Janamejaya.

Most of the sculptures found at Chauduar and dating from the later part of the tenth century onward appear to me to mark the initial stage of the later mediaeval sculpture of Orissa. Among the Brahmanic sculptures, the images of Pārvatī and Kārttikeya (Plate VIII, fig. 4) in the niches of the temple of Pātāleśvara to the south of the ruined city, and of Umāmaheśvara (Plate VII, fig. 2) found in a neighbouring village are typical. An image of Nairṛita (10½" by 6¼"), the guardian of the south-west, probably from one of the ruined Śiva temples, has been presented to the Indian Museum by Babu Kṛṣṇa Chandra Maṅgarāj of Chauduar. There are also ample evidences to show that Buddhism flourished side by side with Śaivism at Chauduar. A seated image of Prajñāpāramitā with a sweet smiling face (Plate VIII, fig. 3) was unearthed a few years ago and is now installed in the open paddy field and worshipped by the villagers as the village godling. In a modern Vaiṣṇava temple within the village there are two Mahāyāna Buddhist images; an image of two-armed standing Tārā (Plate VII, fig. 4), and a two-armed goddess (14½" by 8") standing in archer's attitude with *vajra* in her right hand and a cup (upper half of a human skull) held up by her left hand (Plate VIII, fig. 1). We have acquired from Chauduar for the Indian Museum a seated image (1' 10½" by 11") of twoarmed Avalokiteśvara (Plate VIII, fig. 2) of chlorite schist. Like the image of Avalokiteśvara from Kendrapara (Plate VI, fig. 6), the upper part of the back slab of this image is decorated with landscape and the seven treasures (*ratnas*) pertaining to royalty (wheel, horse, elephant, jewel, wife, householder, commander-in-chief) are carved below the lotus throne. But the pilasters on two sides of these two images are of different types. Five out of the seven *ratnas* are also carved below the lotus throne of the image of Prajñāpāramitā noticed above. Babu Kṛṣṇa Chandra Maṅgarāj of Chauduar has also presented to the Indian Museum a bronze mask of Buddha (Plate VIII, fig. 5) in a perfect state of preservation. The characters of the votive inscription behind the ears of the mask which gives the donor's name indicates that it should be assigned to the 10th or 11th century A. D. A comparison of the modelling of the face of this mask with that of the Bodhisattva images of the Nalatigiri and Udayagiri discloses a stronger influence of conventionalism in the former. The bulk of the figure sculptures found in the niches of the temples of Bhuvaneshvar beginning with Lingaraj and the great temple of Puri and assignable to the 11th and 12th centuries A. D. show a more advanced stage of decadence. The image of Kārttikeya (Plate VIII, fig. 6) now in the Indian Museum that must have belonged to one of the old Śiva temples of Bhuvaneshvar is a typical specimen of this last phase of the later mediaeval Orissan art. Images of this type lack the sincerity and the freshness of the early mediaeval Bodhisattvas and Mātṛis. In Orissa, as in other parts of Northern India, in the later mediaeval period sculpture gradually degenerated while architecture made steady

progress. This degeneration should be attributed to the weakening of the religious spirit, and the corresponding development of architecture to a love of pomp and display that inspired the erection of more and more imposing and richly decorated structures. According to Indian philosophy genuine religious spirit is rooted in the element or factor (*guṇa*) of human nature called *Sattva* (goodness) and the love of pomp and grandeur in the factor called *Rajas* (passion). The decline of religious art is due to the decline of the *Sattva* element in the people.





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ERRATA.

Page 4, line 17.—*For* "Salempur on the southern bank of the Vaitarani," *read* "Salempur on the northern bank of the Vaitarani."

Page 8, line 37.—*For* "Alashuni," *read* "Olashuni."

Page 8, line 38.—*For* "Alashuni," *read* "Olashuni."



1. VĪRĪNĪ, JAIPUR.



2. CHĀMUNḌĪ, JAIPUR.



3. ŚIVADĪTĪ, JAIPUR.



4. KĀUMĪNĪ, JAIPUR.





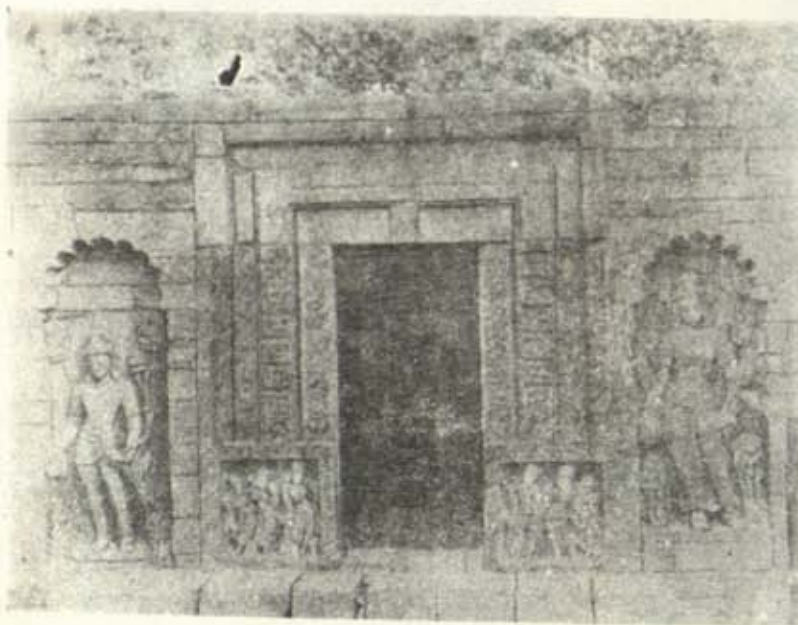
1. MAITREYA, NALATIGIRI.



2. INSCRIBED STONE FROM RATNAGIRI.



3. VAJRASATTVA FROM SALEMUR.



4. CARVED DOOR FRAME, NALATIGIRI.



5. AVALOKITESVARA, NALATIGIRI.



1. AVALOKITEŚVARA, UDAYAGIRI.



2. AVALOKITEŚVARA, UDAYAGIRI.



3. DOORWAY FROM UDAYAGIRI.



4. COLOSSAL BUDDHA, UDAYAGIRI.





1. VAJRAVĀJRA FROM UDAYAGIRI.



2. BUDDHA TOUCHING EARTH, UDAYAGIRI.



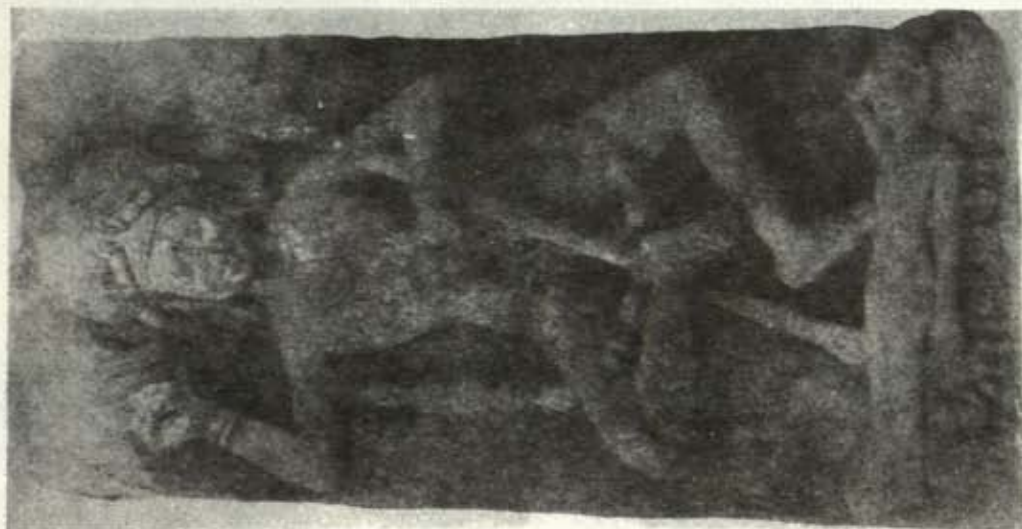
3. BHAIKAVA, RATNAGIRI.



4. AVALOKITEŚVARA FROM RATNAGIRI.



1. TARA, RATNAGIRI.



2. HERUKA, RATNAGIRI.



3. SITING BUDDHA FROM RATNAGIRI.





1. PADMAPĀṆI FROM KENDRAPARA.



2. BRAHMĀṆI, PURI.



3. VAJRAPĀṆI FROM KENDRAPARA.



4. TĀRĪ FROM KENDRAPARA.



5. MĀRĪCHI FROM KENDRAPARA.



6. AVALOKITEŚVARA FROM KENDRAPARA.





1. VISHNUPARA, PURL.



2. UMI-MAHESVARA IN A VILLAGE NEAR CHAUDUAR.



3. CHAUDUAR MOUND.



4. TARI, CHAUDUAR.



1. A BUDDHIST GODDESS, CHAUDUAR.



2. AVALOKITESVARA FROM CHAUDUAR.



3. PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ, CHAUDUAR.



4. KĀRTIKEYA, CHAUDUAR.



5. BRONZE BUDDHA HEAD FROM CHAUDUAR.



6. KĀRTIKEYA FROM BHUVANESVARA.





1. KĀMĀNĪ, PURI.



2. INDRĀNĪ, PURI.



3. CHĀMŪṆĪ, PURI.



4. GAṆḌĀ, PURI.



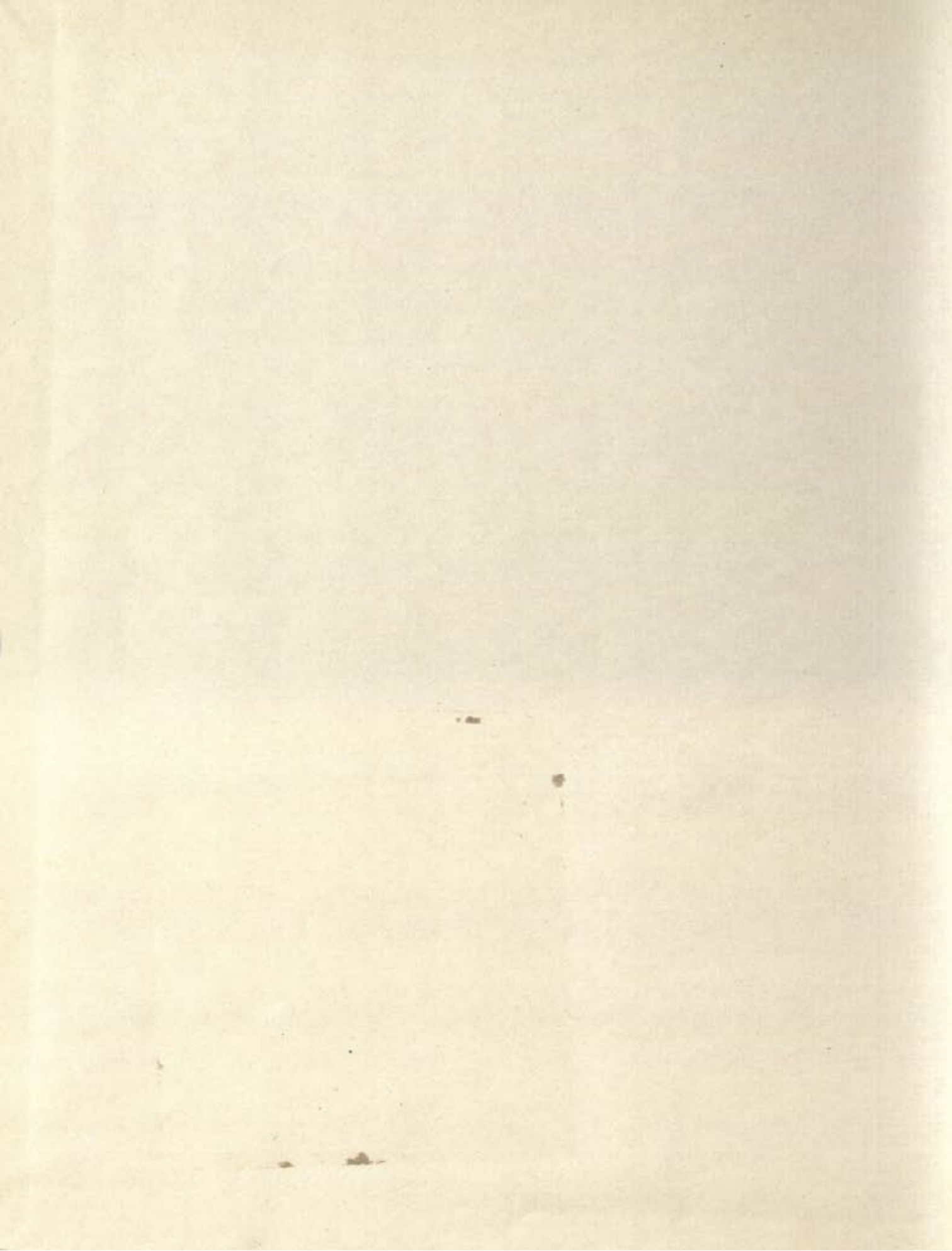
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